

Application No. 10/786,797

**REMARKS**

Claims 1 through 27 are pending herein. By the office action, Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as lacking appropriate antecedent basis and various structural relationships. Claims 1-7, 10-12, 21, and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Riccio (U.S. Patent No. 2,731,223); Claims 1, 13-20, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Paris (U.S. Patent No. 5,213,172) in view of Riccio; Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Riccio in view of Castelli (U.S. Patent No. 2,009,474). Claims 25-27 are allowed. By this amendment, Claims 1, 13-17, 21, and 23 are amended. Claim 24 is canceled. No new matter is added. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

**Rejection of Claims under U.S.C. §112**

In the Office Action, Claims 1-24 were rejected for lacking a proper antecedent basis and various structural relationships. By this amendment, Claims 1, 13, 17, and 23 are amended to provide structural relationships; Claim 21 is amended to provide a proper antecedent basis; Claims 14-16 are amended to remove an ambiguity; and Claims 2-12, 18-21, and 22 depend from amended Claim 1, thus curing the rejection. Because the antecedent bases and structural relationships have been provided, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1-24 be withdrawn.

**Rejection of Claims Under U.S.C. §102(b)**

The amendment to Claim 1 is a broadening amendment submitted to more fully claim that which is Applicants' invention, and is not intended to limit or narrow the scope of the claims or to effect the Doctrine of Equivalents as it might be applied to the claims, were they unamended.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that Claim 24 is objected to only for being dependent upon a rejected base claim. For the reasons described below, all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance.

By this Amendment, Claim 1 is amended to include the features of non-rejected Claim 24; Claim 24 is canceled. Amended Claim 1 includes the feature of an actuator for

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varying the length of the conformable gripping portion of the gripping mechanism, a feature not taught by Riccio. Because Riccio does not teach all the features of amended Claim 1, Applicants believe that Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance. Because Claims 2-23 depend from now presumably allowable Claim 1, Applicants believe that they are also in condition for allowance. Thus, the rejection is overcome and all of the pending claims are allowable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims Under U.S.C. §103(a)

In the Office Action, Claims 1, 13-20, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Paris in view of Riccio; Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Riccio in view of Castelli. As noted in the discussion of the rejections under U.S.C. §102(b), Claim 1, from which Claims 8, 9, 13-20, and 23 ultimately depend, has been amended to include the features of non-rejected Claim 24. Because Riccio does not teach all the features of amended Claim 1, and because Claims 8, 9, 13-20, and 23 depend from now presumably allowable Claim 1, Applicants believe that they are also in condition for allowance. Thus, the rejection is overcome and all of the pending claims are allowable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

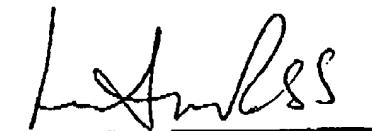
Entry of the above amendments is respectfully requested.

No additional fee is believed to be required for this amendment. However, the undersigned Xerox Corporation Attorney hereby authorizes the charging of any necessary fees, other than the issue fee, to Xerox Corporation Deposit Account No. 24-0025. This also constitutes a request for any needed extension of time and authorization to charge all fees therefor to Xerox Corporation Deposit Account No. 24-0025.

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In the event the Examiner considers personal contact advantageous to the disposition of this case, s/he is hereby authorized to call Applicants' Attorney, Linda M. Robb, at telephone number (310) 333-3683, El Segundo, California.

Respectfully submitted,



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